

VZCZCXYZ0001
RR RUEHWEB

DE RUEHIN #0095/01 0250936
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
R 250936Z JAN 10
FM AIT TAIPEI
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 3198
INFO RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 9663
RUEHHK/AMCONSUL HONG KONG 1047

UNCLAS AIT TAIPEI 000095

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR INR/R/MR, EAP/TC, EAP/P, EAP/PD - THOMAS HAMM
DEPARTMENT PASS AIT/WASHINGTON

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [OPRC](#) [KMDR](#) [KPAO](#) [TW](#)
SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: U.S.-CHINA-TAIWAN RELATIONS

Summary: Taiwan's major Chinese-language dailies focused news coverage January 23-25 on the year-end five city and county magistrates' elections; on developments in cross-Straits relations; and on President Ma Ying-jeou's scheduled visit to Honduras and the Dominican Republic. All major Chinese-language and English-language papers in Taiwan reported on Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's January 21 speech on Internet freedom and President Barack Obama's follow-on remarks that he hopes China will provide answers to the allegation that Google was hacked. In terms of editorials and commentaries, an op-ed in the China-focused "Want Daily" discussed changing U.S.-China-Taiwan relations and said there are still some hard to mediate conflicts among the three sides. An op-ed in the pro-independence, English-language "Taipei Times" discussed Google's threat to quit China and said Google's step "is a courageous move that has prompted considerable rethinking" among Western companies and governments about how to approach China. The Taiwan government should also do its own reflecting, the article commented. End summary.

A) "Conflicts Difficult to Mediate between Washington, Beijing and Taiwan"

Dr. Cheng Tuan-yao from National Chengchi University's Institute of International Relations, opined in the China-focused "Want Daily" [circulation: 10,000] (1/25):

"... Since the Ma Ying-jeou administration assumed office in May, 2008, the ties between Washington, Beijing and Taipei have formed a triangle of positive and friendly relations, which was unprecedented over the past six decades -- both unique and extraordinary. Yet it is undeniable that there are hard to mediate conflicts among the three sides, which not only were not alleviated because [the two sides of the Taiwan Strait] tried to shelve their disputes but have become more evident with the rise of China's power and increasing exchanges among the three sides. First, conflicts between Washington and Beijing over their values and power relations are expanding. ...

"When it comes to U.S.-Taiwan relations, the positioning of the roles the two sides should play is getting vaguer and vaguer. Taiwan, which used to be a loyal ally to the United States, has now moved toward a middle-of-the-road strategic line in an attempt to maintain a friendly interaction with both the United States and China. It tries to befriend China for its economic interests while seeking U.S. support for its security interests. As it turns out, Taiwan turned down the [import of] U.S. beef on the one hand but requests arms sales from the United States on the other. For the United States, is Taiwan a liability or an asset for the U.S.-China relationship after all? Without Taiwan as a burden, will the United States be able to further expand its cooperation with China? Or is it that Taiwan still has the democratic and strategic value of helping the United States obstruct the expansion of China? No matter what [the answers are], except for the arms sales and controversy over [U.S.] beef [imports], there does not seem to be any other issues between Washington and Taipei over the past year

that show their bilateral cooperation. It appears that the apparent smoothness in U.S.-Taiwan relations has failed to cover up the draining relations between the two sides.

"In addition, regarding cross-Strait relations, both sides have yet to shorten their political gap because of their improved relations. ... When we look ahead at the future, it is all right that we keep an optimistic attitude toward the triangular relationship between Washington, Beijing and Taipei. Nonetheless, we must not hold unrealistic expectations for the relationship, because, after all, the conflicts which are hard to mediate among the three sides still remain. ..."

B) "Google's Wake-up Call to the World"

Nat Bellocchi, former AIT chairman and now a special adviser to the Liberty Times Group, opined in the pro-independence, English-language "Taipei Times" [circulation: 30,000] (/25):

"... Google's step is a courageous move that has prompted considerable rethinking among businesses and governments around the world: People are losing patience with Beijing's heavy-handed ways. Many in the West are reconsidering the wisdom of engagement policies that assumed that economic development would lead to political liberalization in China. Against this background, what are the implications of rapprochement across the Taiwan Strait? As has been stated before: Everyone is in favor of reduced tensions -- but under what conditions? Placating an aggressive neighbor could temporarily lead to reduced tensions, but in the long run it only temps the aggressor, aggravating the situation. Three basic conditions that must be met in order for progress to be made in the Taiwan Strait are: a clear consensus in Taiwan on the way ahead; equity, balance and transparency in cross-strait negotiations (with mutual respect for

each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty); and the promotion of Taiwan's international standing and reduction of its international isolation. ...

"While Western companies and governments rethink how to approach China, Taiwan's government should do its own reflecting. If it continues to drift toward China, it will meet increasing hesitation from Western governments and companies. Until now, the West has been willing to maintain informal but solid ties with Taiwan. Closer links with China will widen the gap between Taiwan and the democratic West. Much will also depend on how the US deals with these issues. The administration of US President Barack Obama has said it would lodge a formal diplomatic protest in Beijing over the cyber attacks against Google and other US corporate interests. But it needs to go further than that: It needs to engage China forcefully on the wide array of matters mentioned earlier, including cyber-security, Tibet and the climate.

"Just as the shot heard around the world in 1775 marked the end of 'business as usual' and the start of a new vigilance, Google's move should mark the start of a renewed emphasis on the principles of 'life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.' This should factor into the US' -- and Taiwan's -- interaction with China."

STANTON